

This is the Headline

by Jacob Lefton

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for the first issue in the 29th Volume of the Omen on September the eighth in 2007, the year of our Lord.

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To SUBMIT:

Submissions are due on alternating Saturdays before 5 P.M. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, semaphore, or email. Get your submissions to Lindsay Barbieri, Merrill B103, Box 0542, lkb06@hampshire.edu

"You'd have to drink a lot of vaginal fluid to get your semen to taste like that..."
- Alicia Coombs on How to Make Your Semen Taste Better

Front Cover:

Assembeled by Tara Jacob, Eaten by All.

Comix Intro. and Back Cover:

Evan Silberman



Volume 29 • Issue 1

February 2nd, 2007

Tried to get something out of a Vending Machine by Shaking it...

THE OMEN

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Jacob Lefton	Cigarettes
Lindsay Barbieri	Crucifixion
Stephen Morton	Firing Squad
Evan Silberman	Breaking on the Wheel
Tara Jacob	Stoning
Molly McLeod	Drawn and Quartered
Victoria Quine	Iron Maiden
TK	Driving to Reseda
Sam Campbell	Vivisection
Athena Currier	Tried to get something out of a Vending Machine by Shaking it...

EDITORIAL

Lindsay Kaye Barbieri

Editorial

The only reason I came back to Hampshire College was to be the editor of the Omen.

Becoming The Editor of the Omen was the best way I could think of to insure my future success in life, as a recent study shows the number of Omen editors to become successful in life after Hampshire is rather large. No comparative study has been done for Climax editors. It is my opinion, however, that anyone who puts weeks and weeks of effort into only one Climax every month or so (and it's a mediocre experience at best when the Climax happens) is most likely not *that* successful. I'm just saying. (Speaking of sex, apparently the Omen also gets you laid. So, since I'm back anyway, my room is Merrill B103.)

Besides, I knew that if I had decided not to come back to Hampshire, I would have regreted never being able to join the ranks of bitter Omen editors for the rest of my miserable unsuccessful virgin life.

My name is Lindsay Kaye Barbieri and the truth of the matter is, I love the Omen. Hampshire College and I are on-again off-again with the threat of breaking up a constant and distinct possibility. I feel as if I am putting far more effort into the relationship than Hampshire is. Though even when I'm living with Hampshire, I spend as much time as I can with other colleges.



POLICY

The Omen is Hampshire's longest-running bi-monthly publication, established by Stephanie Cole and Scott Tundermann in December of 1992. In the past, submissions have included students' perspectives on the campus, administration, news, movie reviews, commentary, short fiction, satire, first born, artwork, comics, and the occasional embarrassing self-promotion.

Everything the Omen receives, provided it is sent from a member of the Hampshire community, will be published unless it is deemed libelous or defamatory. Although we find such things amusing and entertaining for countless hours, it is just not an option in this forum. Libel will be considered clearly false or unsupportable writing that maliciously

damages a person's reputation.

The Omen will not edit anything you write (except spelling and grammar). You must sign your real name (no anonymous submissions) and understand that you are responsible for what you say. Nonetheless, views in the Omen do not necessarily represent the views of anyone, anywhere, living or dead.

There is no Omen staff, save those positions of editor-in-chief and layout editor. To qualify for community service you must be a consistent contributor and help regularly with layout. Layout times (and such) will be discussed at our meetings. Meetings are held every Tuesday after release of an issue in the Leadership Center at 6PM. Everyone, everywhere, living or dead, should come.

The Omen loves you.

Occasionally Hampshire leaves notes on my door, in my mailbox and in my inbox that I will be thrown out if I don't give Hampshire my hard-earned money. What's worse is that Hampshire demands far more money than I can come up with and it is at those times that I think most seriously about having The Talk, packing up my things and leaving. But I always wind up scraping up the cash somehow and crawling back to Hampshire for this is where the Omen is, and as long as leaving Hampshire would mean leaving the Omen, leaving Hampshire is not an option.

The Omen owns my body, mind and soul and the Omen knows it. The Omen keeps me in a basement, alone and awake until my morning classes are only a few hours away multiple nights in a row. I tell my family and my friends that everything's fine, that I'm getting my work done and getting enough sleep but the truth is, I'm not. I am hiding the fact that I have a problem. My love for the Omen has become obsessive. I am addicted to 'laying it out'. I sacrifice meals, sleep, friends and family in order to spend more time with the Omen.

I can sleep in three more years. I can make new friends and see my family in three more years. I just hope

I can survive Hampshire for another three years...

If I do graduate it will be thanks to the Omen.



LIBEL OR NOT LIBEL

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)





**News, Commentary,
Announcements,
Propaganda,
Editorials.**

Open Letter from the Student Trustee

Dear Students,

Welcome back to Hampshire! This is an exciting year for the school. For one, we have the search for the Dean of Students—as you know, Michelle Green signed up for two years while we got our shit together, because back then we had just hired Ralph, and the college wasn't ready to undergo another search of that magnitude.

We also needed to hire a new Vice President and Director of Finance, because the old guy who wasn't transparent enough left. Johan Brongers left Hampshire to be the Chief Financial Officer of the new University of Kabul. This is a great opportunity for students!

One of our projects this year is helping to open up the financial institutions at Hampshire. Most of the major money decisions are not shared with students. Along with lack of transparency, there are some serious problems in the system. For example, as I meet more people, I learn of more problems with the financial aid system, and how badly they fuck some students over and won't even take the time of day to walk a student with a question through the process.

With the new treasurer/vp in finance, and the new director of institutional advancement (did you all catch that hidden in Ralph's 'Welcome Back' letter?), we have an opportunity to push these offices to engage students in meaningful ways. By meaningful, I mean three things:

That they will make transparent their whole processes—where money comes from and how it is distributed in organized detail that students will be able to follow,

That they will work with students as major decision makers in this distribution process, and

That they will provide serious learning opportunities in their offices in the form of independent studies and co-curricular classes.

My pet project this year is in line with the Making of a College discussions that Ralph will be having with the community. I'm working on a letter to the Board of Trustees based on my opinions and observations of how poorly Hampshire is doing at fulfilling its mission statement.

Hampshire's mission is to provide an excellent education and to be continually experimenting. In my opinion, the college is no longer experimenting in any significant sense of the word. The new Division I plan is a hyper-traditional model compared to the rest of the system. Its awkwardness can be felt—repercussions are already being seen in Divisions II and III. Also, at times, the trust that the college says it has in its students doesn't exist.

Finally, I would like to help define the role of the student trustee and

the representatives to the trustee committees. They have not been well defined in the past—and no wonder. The Board is very distant from the students. I hope to change that. My first strategy on that axis will be to attempt to bring Trustees to campus before the Student Trustee elections to talk about the different sub-committees and what important role students play on the Board.

You can e-mail me at jwl04@hampshire.edu with any questions and comments, or talk with me when you see me. I will do my best to make time for you.

Have a great semester!

Sincerely,

Jacob Lefton



Lift Thine Eyes

by Aaron Buchsbaum

Apparently Pavarotti died today of cancer. This is not so much a cause of woe and concern for me personally as it is for ye olde mass culture and the archetypes upon which it relies. Dead Beatles, dead Johnny Cash-es, dead Elvis-es, dead (someday) Stephen King-s, and even dead Crocodile Hunters. Surely some of us feel a profound psychological trauma - to that point I will in good faith concede, in particular as concerns the Croc guy and the spat of retaliation taken against sting rays on the Australia coast. Take that, you svelt aquatic zeppelins! - but by and large losing an archetype is akin to losing a relative whom you didn't really know but whose death you feel should be upsetting. Instead the only real reaction you feel is expressed to that irritating acronymical imposter 'wtf?', as you swig your pulped-up oj over the morning SLATE.COM because we're too clodhopperly and agitated to properly handle a newspaper on the subway.

Yea, an archetype dies and what is left is not mourning but a strange void in the way things are that should probably be filled. Like if you're in a bus terminal and a diabetic's blood sugar crashes and suddenly he's shaking on the floor. Everything was normal a second ago, and now there is a snake of poorly dressed, brainless, and ticketless would-be travelers waiting for the man to stop shaking such that their attentions can be turned back to the formica desk that shines with the promise of transportation and skip-happy Disney DVDs. Normalcy is dissolved until the EMTs come round, or some happy soul finds glucose tablets in the guys pocket without touching his penis. Wooo-eee-ooo-eee-ooo-eee and some people in Fire Brigade shirts

come in through the side door and ask thoughtful questions as they hoist Mr. Diabetes (as he shall be forever known to all the travelers) onto a gurney and out into their mystical ameliorative rig. Once the shakey guy is gone, all ticketless people will in due time be ticketed and their thoughts left undisturbed until a crackly loudspeaker urges them to get on the Coastal Maine bus, south to Skowhegan. Ergo it is, the vociferous void in the banal normalcy of Thursday bus fare has been filled by the poignant, full-bodied normalcy of knowing things are once again normal.

Which is all well and good for buses and tears in the space-time continuum, relativity, E&M, and both strong and weak nuclear forces. Sadly the EMT's here failed to save Pavarotti and so we're left with that atrocious lack in the musical world, an all-consuming, black-as-death, tarot-skunked, Kianu Reeves emptiness. You are peripherally cognizant that the shit's there - or rather isn't - and this irks you ever so slightly because you can neither see nor directly feel it. Kind of like the bad things that go into a Wendy's Frosty - they have to be there, but it tastes so good and you just can't bring yourself to believe the evil, now can you? Ever worked as a frosty jerk? No, you haven't, so the analogy stands, and that's righteously upsetting to me the author of this acrimonious piece of 30 minute lit. The things that happen at the last minute are contrived, pointless, and poorly executed. If you want to make things suspenseful and For Real, take your time. Like with kittens.

So Pavarotti. Either a miraculous collection of

tribute cds tides us over until the next big thing steps up, or the archetype of Global Opera Guy lies vacant like so many teenage gothic hearts. No resplendent Italianate aural orgasms. That force has been silenced by cancer. True, it may be approximated in small Columbia House Records Approved doses from other bawdy singers, but we're talking about an archetype here people. The Ascended. The many Siege Perilous of the celestial worlds, whose inhabitants peruse the Akashic Record is read like so many coffee table books on Ancient Byzantine relics. The good news is that someone must rise, to the occasion; such states cannot go ungoverned. We all know and respect balance my friends, and to lose our

operatic ways in these times of ratiocination, of sci-fi-cum-veritas, and inexorable progress towards Übermensch. . . . I say no sirs and no ladies. We shall not accept, and the very rules, not of Nature, but of that buzzing visceral haven that is Humanity, will necessarily force the cream to rise from the shit.

Hope is not to be lost on this day, dear readers. Chin up and hold tight. Drink your cocoa, with marshmallow and wooden stirring stick, Presidents of the United States playing jauntily in the background. Together we've been through much and awfuller; keep your wrists clean and nick free, and grab a friend for the subtly tantric ride to archetypes-ville. I'm with you 100%, and so is post-mortem-Pava.



The Omen Loves You.

by Stephen Morton

Greetings and Salutations, my fellow Hampshire Students. Welcome back to School, or in the case of our many First Years, simply welcome. Your Ability to read this Article indicates that you have managed to not die for another Year, an impressive Feat under many Circumstances. Perhaps under your Circumstances, it was not so impressive, but regardless, I wish you Luck in continuing your Trend of not dying.

Unless, of course, you wish to change that. That's your Issue, and I'm not touching that.

So! This is the Omen, as you may have noticed. If you haven't noticed, you probably didn't look at the Cover. Which you should. I haven't seen it yet, but I'm sure it's a completely awesome and amazing Cover which is really exciting and you should totally check it out.

The Omen loves you. This is important to remember. When I say you, I mean you, personally. Not some generic, anonymous you. You, the person reading this right now. The Omen loves you. As a token of this Love, the Omen provides a vital Service: We hate so you don't have to. If you have Something to hate, just write about it in the Omen! Now, you don't have to hate this Thing that you hate: the Omen is doing it for you! See how easy that was?

Some History for you: the Omen was

founded in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole. We know this is True because it says so at the Front of the Omen. The Omen never lies. Ever. This means that the Omen is really old, especially in Hampshire Years, where fifteen Years is about 200 normal, human Years. Wow!

In these fifteen Years, the Omen has done a lot of Things. This diversity of Things is due to the Fact that we print nearly Everything which is submitted to us. In theory, we do not print Libel. This because Libel is illegal. In practice, I do not know of any case where this as been an Issue. Also, you need to be willing to put your Name on it. The Omen is not Anonymous.

As another result of this Diversity, the Omen is often controversial. If Something in the Omen makes you angry, you should write about it in the Omen! It's Easy and Fun, and a much better Idea than say, getting us brought up before Community Council, a-ha-ha. This happened in 2000, and was so not cool. So don't do it. Remember, the Omen loves you. Why do you want to hurt Something that loves you?

In conclusion, submit to the Omen! It's just a good idea.

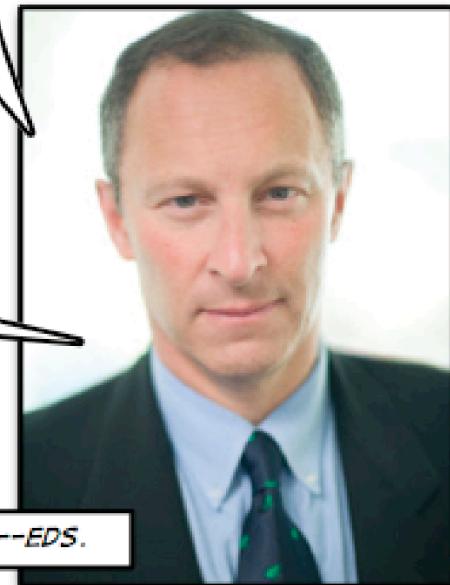


THE OMEN PRESENTS

**SECTION
COMIX!**

THE OMEN LOVES YOU!*

*SEE LAST ISH! --EDS.



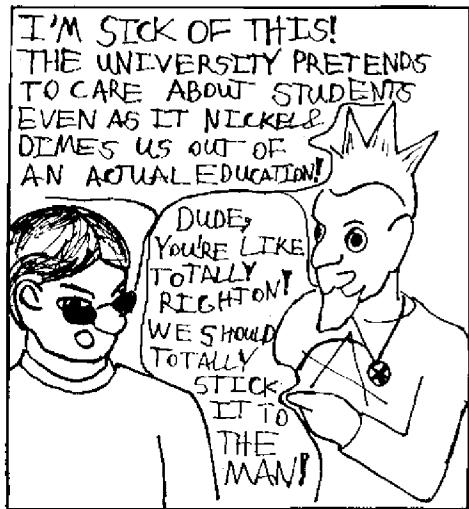
A2VY

Luke Kunkel Pinotter

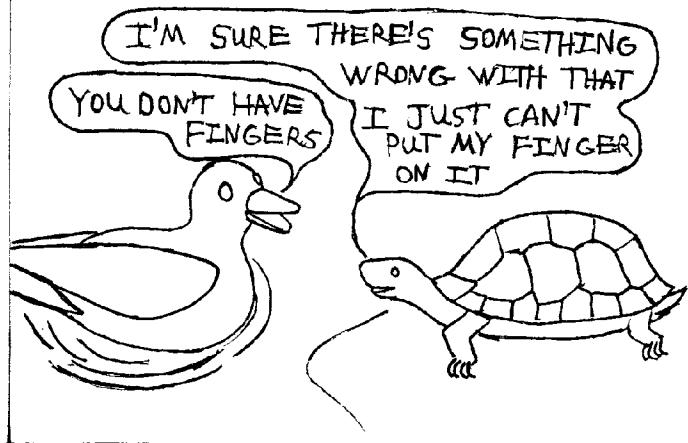
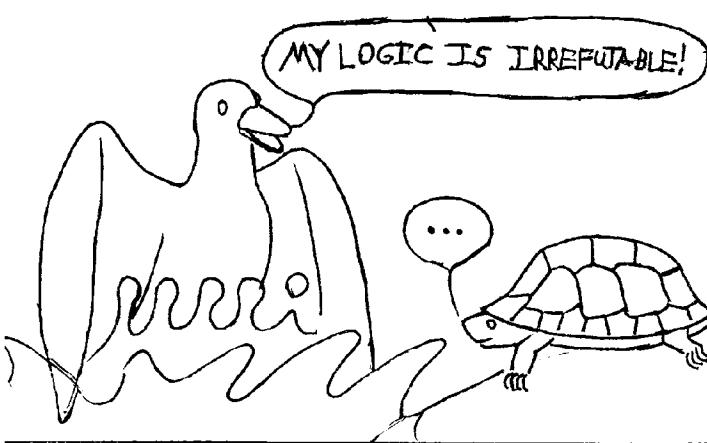
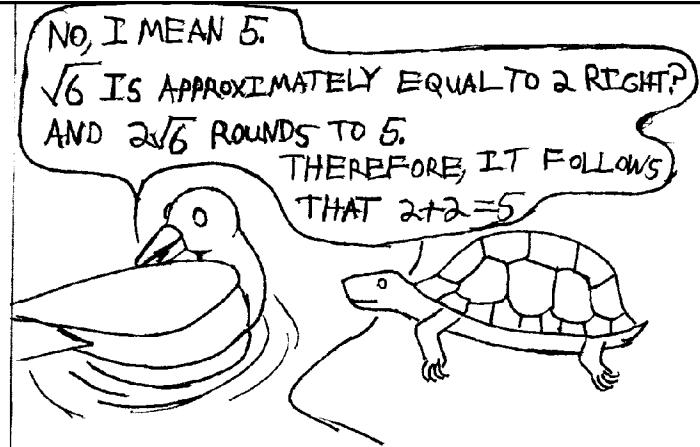
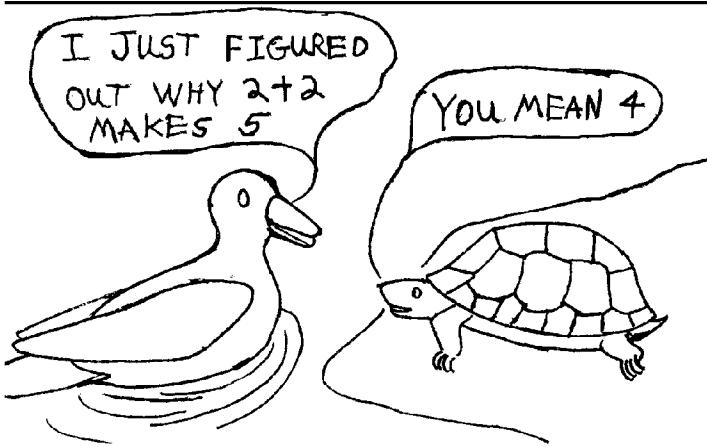


Originally, hippies were part of a youth movement composed mostly of white teenagers and young adults, between the ages of 15 and 25 years old, who inherited a tradition of cultural dissent from the earlier Bohemians and the beatniks. Hippies rejected established institutions, criticized middle class values, opposed nuclear weapons, opposed the Vietnam War, embraced aspects of Eastern religions, championed sexual liberation, were often vegetarian and eco-friendly, promoted the use of psychedelic drugs to expand one's consciousness and created intentional communities or communes. They used alternative arts, street theatre, folk music, and psychedelic rock as a part of their lifestyle and as a way of expressing their feelings, their protests and their vision of the world and life. Hippies opposed political and social orthodoxy, choosing a gentle and non-doctrinaire ideology that favored peace, love and personal freedom. - Blatantly Stolen From Wikipedia.

CRENSHAW



DUCK & COVER Luke Kundl Pinette



HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION

By ATHENA CURRIER

BACK IN MINNESOTA



SEEING OLD FRIENDS



Nat? Why would
he call me?? Gah,
I won't pick up...

HEY-LET'S HANG
OUT SOMETIME.
-NAT-

AWKWARD!
Nat was too
COOL in high
school. At home,
I'm a GEEK.
What the fuck?
Sketchy.
Ignore,
Ignore.

Nat wants
to make
a move
on you.

NAT?! Gah, I
don't know
what to think!

WALKING AROUND HIGH ON A GOLF COURSE

FLIRTING~



PLAYING DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

Ex-boyfriend Sam

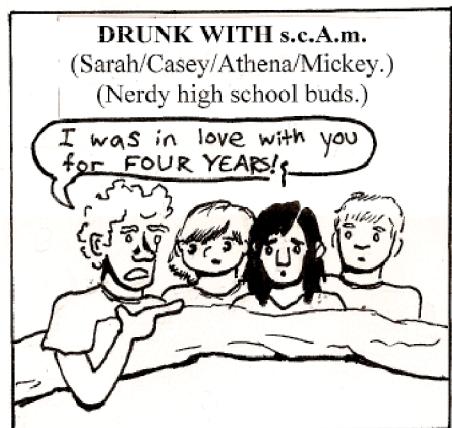
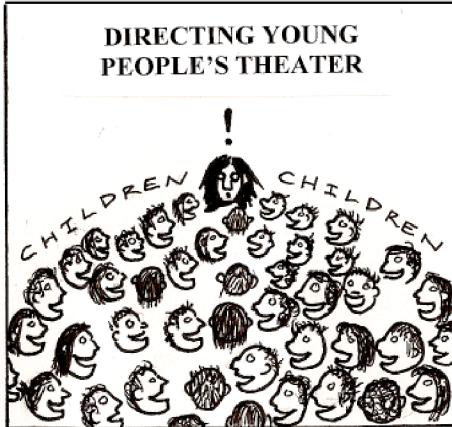
Intentional
arm bumps



FREAKING OUT

I SHOULD BE WRITING OR
MAKING MUSIC OR DRAWING
COMICS OR READING OR
MAKING MOVIES
ETC. ETC.
WHAT IF
I'M JUST
A BIG
LOSER?





DRUNKLY CONVERSING
WITH EX-BOYFRIEND



AWKWARD FAREWELL-ING



DELETING



CAVING (3 DAYS
LATER)

REACTIVATE: BECCA WAS IN TOWN!
ON: NAT CALLED!



Oh well I might as well just never talk to people ever. I'm mean and ugly and an all-around heinous bitch.

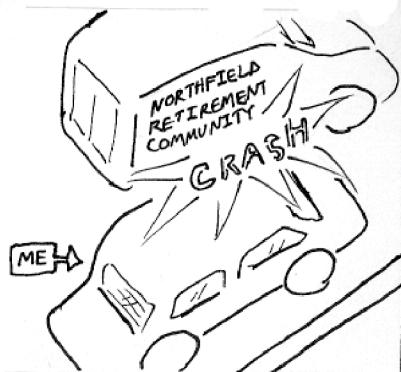


PIERCING

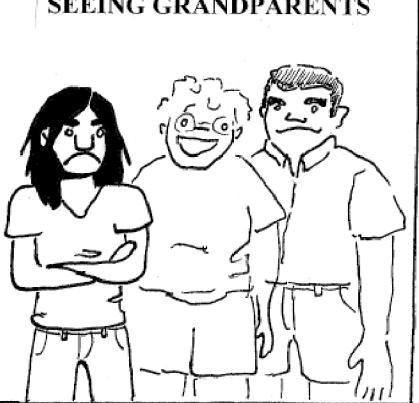


END OF 2ND SESSION YPT



HITTING OLD PEOPLE**EXPLAINING IT TO THE COPS**

ACCIDENT COST:
\$1,200

**SHOWING MY MOVIES****TALKING TILL 6 AM****STANDING ON A HILL IN THE RAIN****MAKING OUT WET WITH RAIN****GOING TO A SONICATE CONCERT****SEEING GRANDPARENTS****FEELING NOSTALGIC****FINE.**

Nate Vs. The Second Year



Mike Doyle's Section of Hatred

An Ode to “That Fucking Guy”

This past May, I saw many of my friends graduate after four years of Hampshire College. There were the former residents of A1 long from my epic first year. There were many friends I met through theater and film/video projects. And of course, many students I came to know just from wherever. But none of those friends, classmates, and etc. people had as profound an impact on me as someone I only knew as “that fucking guy.” Over my past three years at Hampshire, I have seen that fucking guy as a rival, an enemy, a friendship doomed to fail, and maybe even as a soul mate. I never really learned his name. I know I heard it a few times, and read it at least once at the commencement ceremony, but it never sunk in. He will always be known to me as ‘that fucking guy.’ Our paths first crossed in February of my first year. Even though I never met him, I disliked him instantly. He had jeans that were too tight and looked like a bland and obnoxious wash. He wore either leather or denim jackets which pissed me off even more. His hair was goofy looking and ridiculously curly, and his posture and gait implied to me that he was a simpleton. I was convinced that if he opened his mouth, he would sound like a confused idiot. So for most of three years, my feelings of hatred towards him were based solely on his appearance. A few of my friends had met him once or twice and told me he was a nice guy, but I knew better. That guy, that fucking guy, was a jackass who hated me just as much as I hated him. Earlier this year, I got drunk and tried to introduce myself to him. I didn’t want to go up and say “Hey, I hate you,” so I said he was a cool guy and I liked his jacket. I told him my name, but then

he gave me some fake fucking name, playing me for a fool.

That PROVED he was an asshole. I continued hating that fucking guy as the months passed, seeing him less and less. When I learned he was graduating, I went through a spinning tea-cup’s roller coaster of tilt-a-whirl emotions. On one hand, I hated him. Obviously I didn’t want him to be around anymore. But if he was gone... who would I hate? I realized he was the Batman to my Joker, the Superman to my Lex Luthor, or the road runner to my Wile E. Coyote. Except HE was the bad guy.

Commencement came, and quite fittingly, he was the last name called. As everyone around my clapped and cheered, I shook my fist at my arch-nemesis. Some might say that he won the battle as he was graduating. I would like to think of the situation as though I drove him away, making myself the clear victor. But all things considered, it was probably a draw. As the graduates milled around, shaking hands and hugging loved ones, I walked up behind him, tapped him on the shoulder, and extended my hand to shake his. At first, he looked bewildered, that confused face I had come to know and hate from a distance, but then he smiled smugly (like an asshole), shook my hand, and I walked into the crowd, never to see him again. We said no words to each other, but something in his eyes told me he knew what he had meant to me these past three years. I am going to miss him. But only because I hated him so much.

Written by Mike Doyle, about that fucking guy I hated for no reason, wherever he may be.



Jericha Senyak's

Dear Hampshire,

Could We Have Better Sex Please?

Volume I

People talk to me about sex a lot. This might be due to the fact that I'm majoring in erotic cinema, and therefore I talk about sex a lot, or maybe it's just that I'm incredibly sympathetic and trustworthy, but the point is that I have become, well, rather intimately familiar with the sex lives of Hampshire students. And let me tell you, Hampshire students have a fuck-ton of sex. Which is great. It's groovy. It's delightful and healthy and I fully support it. Free love! It's the Hampshire way. What else would you expect from a school founded in '65 that ranks #4 on the Princeton Review's potheads-per-capita list? ("Not #1?" I hear you ask...)

Except...well, rare is the Hampshire student who has a totally glowing sexual encounter to report. Maybe you had sex that was so hot it melted the bed-springs, but then you can't have it any more because the other person might get attached and you just can't handle any demands on your autonomy right now. Or maybe you spent the entire night flirting, dancing and exchanging suggestive banter with some terribly attractive person who then walked you back to your room - kissed you on the cheek - and bounced. Or maybe you keep getting drunk as a skunk and hooking up with people even more shitfaced than you and by now you've really just had it up to here with waking up next to somebody you'd be embarrassed to be seen with at Saga. Or maybe you've reached the point of such despair over your chances of finding a pleasant, casual, simple sexual relationship - and by relationship, I don't mean the R-word, okay, please recall that any interaction between two people is a relationship, it doesn't always signify exclusivity - on campus that the goats down on the farm are starting to look like a viable outlet for your raging libido.

I mean, it's funny. Everyone I talk to says essentially the same thing: "Well, I don't want a relationship, but I'm really sick of having shitty meaningless hook-ups." Nobody wants to sacrifice their independence, and yet - well, wouldn't it be nice to open your eyes in the morning and actually be glad to see the person next to you? Not because you're so madly in love with them or whatever, but because they're nice people

with whom you can have great, nonawkward morning sex and hug them goodbye afterwards with the knowledge that you won't have to avert your eyes every time you see them for the next month.

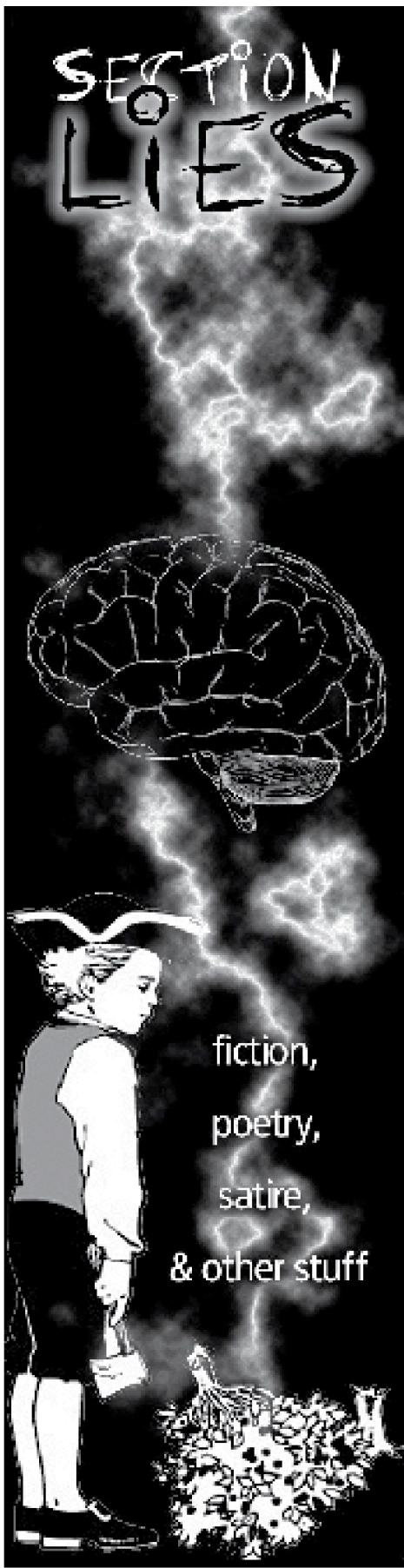
Everybody's bitching starts to sound the same: "It's not that complicated! I don't want to be attached at the hip! I like you, you're fun to hang out with, you're great in bed, end of story! This is not some big love thing! This is not about commitment, this is about enfucking-joying ourselves! Why is this so difficult?!"

Nothing seems to exist outside the extremes of monogamous, longterm, facebook-official relationships and completely meaningless, no-strings-attached sex. Could somebody please explain to me the reason that a middle ground is so completely inconceivably impossible? Listen, sex is way better when you actually don't feel completely contemptuous of the person you're banging. When you're sleeping with someone whose presence in your bed you actually appreciate, wonderful things can happen. Like pulling out that whip you've always kept under your bed just in case some lovely and enthusiastic trustworthy person comes along. Or getting oral sex where the person going down on you seems not to be trying to hide their distaste for your sweaty genitals, but rather looks like they're actually deriving pleasure from pleasing you. Even that elusive, possibly mythical event, the simultaneous orgasm, becomes possible. Sex not as a means to simple physical satisfaction, but for pleasure! Mutual pleasure! What a concept.

Yeah. Just something to think about.

P.S. Dear Hampshire boys, I have been hearing from a number of Hampshire girls that there is a definite lack of ripping-off-the-clothes-the-second-the-door-closes, shove-me-up-against the wall-and-carry-me-to-the-bed type sex going down on campus. This is not to say that you have any license to push us around any time you think we might be into you, but once it becomes really clear that we're all up in your groove (if we've already hooked up once and nothing's happened to prevent a reoccurrence, for example), it's nice to feel like we're in a movie and you just can't get enough of us, okay? Thanks.





David's Wisdom Nook

by David Mansfield

David Mansfield is the author of four self-help books: *Babies Don't Like Everyone*, *Finding Connections In A Reclusive Society*, *Making Marriages Last*, and *The Great Big Book of Trains*. He currently lives in Amherst, Massachusetts with his wife and three kids. A professor at Hampshire College, he teaches classes solely about Roald Dahl's *Matilda*.

Dear Readers,

Welcome back to another semester at Hampshire College! Some of you may remember the Nook from last year. Some of you may also remember being devastated by its premature demise at the hands of a giant robot. To those included in the aforementioned group, I have some good news. That's right: David's Wisdom Nook is back, hopefully for longer this time. There are some subtle differences (and by "subtle differences" I mean "it is shorter"), but I hope that it will still send cascades of glee shuddering violently through your body.

Dear David,

I recently moved into an apartment in a new city. I have an old friend here who just moved out of his own apartment and asked if he could "crash" on my couch for a few days. At first I had no problem with this, but those few days have turned into a month, and he shows no sign of leaving. I don't want to put a friend out on the streets, but I need to have my space. What should I do?

Unwelcome Roommate Never Going Away—Leave Please!

Dear URNGALP,

It sounds like your "friend" has certainly overstayed his welcome. I know that it can be difficult, but you need to assert yourself and let him know who's boss, URNGALP. You can be upfront or subtle about this; each works equally well depending on the person. For a subtle approach, try replacing his blanket with a new one, made completely of live spiders with interlocked legs. Train them so that when you blow a whistle inaudible to human ears, they unlock their legs and try to crawl into his mouth, nose, ears, and navel. This will send the message that your friend is no longer welcome. If you're a more assertive person, try commanding your spider army to simply carry him from the room while harmonizing with you as you sing a song about your feelings.

That's all for this time. For more, visit the archives at davidswisdomnook.blogspot.com.



I Could Never Get the Hang of Thursdays

A fortnightly column by Rachel Rakov

Hello once again, fair readers. It's been awhile, hasn't it? I hope that everyone has had a good summer, and that your worlds have not been torn asunder due to not having read my column in the past four months. But before I get back into writing my usual collection of various ramblings that are almost *always* at least two days late, I wanted to mention a few changes that have been made to this column, pertaining primarily to the by-line.

For those of you not familiar with the nature of this column, when I first started writing it a year and a half ago, it was primarily a tribute column to my favorite late author, Douglas Adams. I have tried to write columns in his particular style and voice, covering topics I think he might have covered and taking the stance on issues in the way that he might of, were he a columnist for this publication. I have even gone so far as to have written *in* his actual voice, although I have always made sure to include a disclaimer at the end of each article that includes my name, to assure people that I am not, in fact, Douglas Adams.

Writing this column in this style has been amazing for me; it has challenged my own personal writing style and given me an idea of what it must have been like for Douglas Adams back when he did, in fact, write newspaper columns. I have even found that he and I share some similar sentiments on the subject of writing for a deadline – as I write this, my editor has had to ask me at least four times very politely for this column. I hope to be better about it in the future, although with my track record, this is possibly a vain hope.

In addition to expanding my own personal horizons as a writer, writing this column has also gotten me some attention from other people in the humor writing world. A humor writer who has actually been published came across my name in

relation these columns and, being a huge Adams fan himself, contacted me and asked if he could read some of my columns. He ended up reading a few and giving me some lovely suggestions on how they might be improved. Sometimes cool things like that just happen.

But the main reason that I've been writing these columns in the voice of Douglas Adams for the past year and a half is mostly as a tribute to the man himself. He died suddenly in 2001, and I remember how upset I was when I realized that there would never be a new book by him again. I have, at this point, read all of his books save one (which, in case you are interested, is called 'Last Chance to See'). I have purposely not read this book, because I know that once I do, there will be nothing left by him for me to read that I have not read before. It's a daunting thought. I am sure that at some point I will get to read 'Last Chance to See', but I am putting it off at least for awhile longer.

However, as you might recall from the beginning of this column, and perhaps have even noticed from today's by-line, I have decided to stop writing as Douglas Adams. This is not because I no longer respect or value the man and his writing, nor does it mean that this column will no longer be a tribute to him; as you can see from the above paragraph, it is pretty clear that I still hold him in the highest of regards.

No, the reason I am no longer writing in his direct voice is this: I no longer feel that I can be as true to his style as he deserves. Let me explain that thought a bit. When I started writing this column, I spent a lot of time thinking about what topics I could write on that would be not only interesting to the reading public, but also that would stay true to what Douglas Adams would have written about. I did a good job, I think, at least for the first ten columns or so. After that, though, I found it was becoming harder and harder to

find topics that Adams himself would have chosen to write about. Coming up with a topic to write about every other week is surprisingly difficult, but when I had to work within the confines of choosing something Adams might have written about as well, picking a suitable topic became almost impossible. I am not particularly proud of the past four columns that I have written in the name of Douglas Adams; to me, they do not feel authentic. And I cannot allow myself to continue putting his name on something that cannot live up to it.

And so that is why I will no longer be writing this column as the voice of our beloved tall Englishman with an abnormally large and more decorative than functional nose. I will, however, continue to be writing in the style that he often preferred using, as it is fun and makes for good reading. My columns will remain largely unchanged, apart from the by-line and the disclaimer notice at the end. Probably most of you wouldn't have noticed if I hadn't mentioned it, but I did want to make it known. I'll be back next fortnight with more irreverent ramblings about nothing in particular. Until then, enjoy yourselves, and don't be worried when you can't really get the hang of Thursdays – I personally don't believe anyone really can.

*Rachel Rakov is largely inspired the writings of Douglas Adams. We apologize for the inconvenience.



Douglas Adams

Fun Facts

Adams, script editor on Doctor Who, co-wrote the serial City of Death with producer Graham Williams when a commissioned script failed to meet requirements. The episodes were credited to David Agnew, the BBC's in-house pseudonym.

Douglas Adams was once a bodyguard for a wealthy Arab family from the country of Qatar.

From 1984 until 2001, Douglas Adams was a Macintosh computer user.

In 1994, Douglas Adams climbed Mount Kilimanjaro wearing a rhino suit, for the British charity "Save the Rhino", earning £100,000.

Douglas Adams often claimed that he thought up the name 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy' while he was in Innsbruck. An intoxicated Douglas wandered into a field and fell asleep, with a copy of 'Hitch-hiker's Guide to Europe' in his possession. Unfortunately, M.J. Simpson proved that Douglas came up with the name several months after his voyage around Europe.

Douglas Adams failed movie script 'Doctor Who and the Krikkitmen' eventually turned into the HHGG novel 'Life, the Universe and Everything'.

Douglas Adams was comedically influenced by Monty Python, Kurt Vonnegut, and G. Wodehouse. He was musically influenced by 'The Beatles', 'Pink Floyd', and 'Procol Harum'.

Douglas Adams owned twenty-four left-handed guitars when he passed away.

(Trivia From: TV.com)



